

crores. The funds were released by the cooperative bank disregarding RBI Regulations and norms of not granting advances to stock brokers. Besides the bank has also raised Rs. 197 crores from various banks in the call money market to meet its payments.

(b) and (c) RBI has intimated that it has been collecting data on the borrowing and lending operations in call, notice and term money market from all banks, including foreign banks, from mid 1997. All foreign banks have been regularly supplying information on their borrowing and lending in the call, notice and term money markets to RBI.

(d) RBI has collected data from scheduled commercial banks in respect of advances against shares to stock brokers, individuals and other borrowers.

**Involvement of Customs officials In smuggling at Indira Gandhi International Airport**

•559. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that senior Customs officials posted at the Indira Gandhi International Airport are helping smugglers to smuggle goods into the country;

(b) whether CBI raided offices and residence of 48 senior and middle level Customs officials in different cities in this connection;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what action Government propose to take against the officials so that others may not emulate them?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA): (a) to (d) On 28.8.2000, a Uzbek woman was intercepted at IGI Airport, Delhi while attempting to clear Chinese Silk fabrics without declaring them to the Customs Authorities. Later she was arrested and detained under COFEPOSA Act. The matter was subsequently investigated by Director General Revenue Intelligence and Director General (Vigilance), CBEC. On the basis of the preliminary investigation conducted, 33 officers were suspended and the case was

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handed over to CBI. Subsequently, CBI registered a case in the matter and on 31.3.2001, conducted searches including the office and residential premises of 48 Customs Officials. The investigations by CBI are in progress.

**Benefits under WTO commitments**

\*560. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are making efforts to face the challenge and reap the benefit of WTO commitments; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) and (b) India was a founder member of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1947 and has been consistently supporting the strengthening of the rule-based multilateral trading system. Government decided to sign the Uruguay Round of Agreements after taking into account the balance of obligations and rights conferred by these agreements. WTO provides a rule based, transparent and predictable multilateral trading system which protects the member countries from the pressures of their stronger trading partners. WTO is a democratic organisation which works on the principle of one country one vote and as such India as well as other members have a say in the rule making process in WTO.

WTO rules envisage non-discrimination in the form of National Treatment and Most Favoured Nation (MFN) \* treatment to our exports in the markets of other WTO Members. National Treatment ensures that our products once imported into the territory of oth&r WTO Members would not be discriminated *vis-a-vis* the domestic products in those countries. MFN treatment principle ensures that Members do not discriminate among various WTO Members not only in their tariff regimes but also in respect of various other rules, regulations, incentives etc.